



Physical Safeguards

HIPAA Security ♦ November 2003

General Requirement

HIPAA's Security Rule divides its protections into three categories: physical (discussed here), administrative and technical safeguards. Each safeguard category includes various standards and implementation specifications. The Rule defines physical safeguards as "physical measures, policies and procedures to protect a covered entity's electronic information systems and related buildings and equipment, from natural and environmental hazards, and unauthorized intrusion."

What must covered entities do to demonstrate compliance?

Documented policies and procedures are required for compliance with the Security Rule. Comprehensive documentation of security measures is also required. Documentation must be kept current, and a historical record maintained as well. Those two standards are included in the matrix below for completeness, but they apply to all safeguard areas.

How should the matrix be used?

The physical safeguards standards and specifications are presented in the matrix below. All standards are required. The implementation specifications associated with some standards provide additional detail when needed and are either required or addressable. For more information on a particular standard and the associated implementation specifications, follow the link in the left column.

Standard(s)	All are required	CFR section (Code of Federal Regulations)
Implementation Specification	(r)=required; (a)=addressable	
facility access controls	164.310(a)(1)	contingency operations (a) facility security plan (a) access control and validation procedures (a) maintenance records (a)
workstation use	164.310(b)	
workstation security	164.310(c)	
device and media controls	164.310(d)(1)	disposal (r) media re-use (r) accountability (a) data backup and storage (a)
policies and procedures	164.316(a)	
documentation	164.316(b)(1)	time limit (r) availability (r) updates (r)

Matrix adapted from Appendix A to Subpart C of Part 164

See also:

Appendix A to Subpart C of Part 164
Security Rule applicability (HIPAA)